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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR JANUARY 5, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for January 5, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

OZGUR GUNDEM: The people (of Turkey) paid the price of human rights violations that General Yavuz Erturk (allegedly) committed during the operations he carried out in the (southeastern) region, with a compensation payment of 2.5 trillion Turkish liras (1.8 million USD) to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). ECHR criticized Turkey for not having Yavuz Erturk attend the court hearings as a witness. Yavuz Erturk, who retired as a Major-General rank from the army, is contributing articles to Yeni Cag, a newspaper known for nationalistic tendencies.

OZGUR GUNDEM: According to Bingol Branch of the Human Rights Association, 158 human rights violations were allegedly committed at Bingol in 2004. During the conflicts that went on in Bingol throughout the year, allegedly, nine people died, eleven people were wounded and two people were killed. Mines and explosives wounded six people, the deaths and suicides of thirteen people raised suspicions and forty-three people were taken into custody. Out of forty-three, eight people were arrested and twenty-nine people were allegedly exposed to torture, threats and bad treatment. Two villages and five houses in the city centers were allegedly raided and subjected to warrantless searches. Lastly, one person has applied to the Human Rights Association with an allegation of rape.

OZGUR GUNDEM: 120 people, who ran away from their villages in Ercis, Van, due to the alleged oppressive attitude of the Agha, have now been subject to another internal displacement within their own country, according to Ozgur Gundem. These "refugees" in their own land are not welcomed in the township they arrived at, which is Demirkoy, Kirklareli. They were escorted last night by the police and taken away from Demirkoy to a refugee guesthouse in Kirklareli.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The villagers in Yedisu township of Bingol prevented nine village guards from fishing in a river on December 12 because the guards were fishing with hand grenades. The villagers are now allegedly exposed to threats from the village guards. Hence, the villagers applied to the Human Rights Association for any possible offences the guards may subject them to in the future.

CUMHURIYET: Because of the improper fishing practices and the ignorant attitudes of fishermen in the Mediterranean Sea, the forty thousand ton fish harvest from the 1990s have declined dramatically to ten thousand tons. "The fishing seasons are very long, the fishermen are using improper methods, such as poisonous baits and explosives", said Bedii Cici, a member of the faculty of Mersin University Faculty of Fisheries.

RADIKAL / TERCUMAN / CUMHURIYET: Nineteen students from the Kargili hamlet of the Ortac village of Yuksekova in Hakkari province are walking ten kilometers from their home to school every day. Armed guards escort them against the wild animals. The students demand that a transportation system be established to ease their travel to school.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

1. ZAMAN / CUMHURIYET / SABAH (GUNEY): PM Erdogan was not able to resist the demands of MPs on the Incentive Law. Erdogan announced that the scope of the Incentive Law will be expanded and thirteen more cities will be included in the new system. PM Erdogan further added that MPs should make no further demands about the Law. On the other hand, Sabah (Guney) reports that the AKP Gaziantep Provincial Chairperson said that Gaziantep should be included in the incentive package of the GoT and that they will strive to include Gaziantep within the scope of the Incentive Law. Gaziantep and five other cities were very recently removed from the incentive list of the government.

2. OZGUR GUNDEM: The Van Commercial Commodity Exchange Office and the Training Center for Service-Sector Occupations announced that courses on silver manufacturing will be offered under the EU funded "Active Workforce Project". The courses aim to train unemployed youth, former prisoners, physically handicapped people and the unskilled labor force in order to

assist them in finding occupational opportunities in silver manufacturing.

13. BOLGE / TURKIYE: According to Umit Ozgumus, the Presiden

of the Adana Chamber of Industry, the Incentive Law will bring no beneficial outcomes for the economy of the country. Ozgumus said that the Law paves the way for providing unfair competitive advantage to one city over another, and may cause a the loss of a great deal of business in the latter. Ozgumus proposes that the government annuls the Incentive Law, and launch a new incentive system that soundly assesses the export potential of cities and gives priority to the ones, which can substitute imports and draw foreign exchange to the country.

14. SABAH / ZAMAN / MILLI GAZETE / CUMHURIYET / TURKIYE: The Government (of Turkey) is trying to please the farmers. Sami Guclu, the Minister of Agriculture, announced that the GoT is going to improve the agricultural incentives comprehensively. According to the new enhancements, high premium subsidies for cattle breeding will be provided and the farmers that utilize more agricultural technologies will be receive more subsidies. The GoT (of Turkey) will announce the whole package of agricultural incentives -including tax reductions and payment installments on many items, such as fuel oil, fertilizers, cotton premium prices and electricity debts, etc.- on January

10.

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